613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
• [765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead members of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a ceremony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the deceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members observed death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang.

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy.

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection.

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tāli of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen.

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

564
613 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom
588 severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce
by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth)
[184] which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however,
[586] confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of
the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the
[765] divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her
[783] Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli
on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at
any other time; and he may be old or young. He is
often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small
present for his services. The ceremony is always the
occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may
remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the
man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered
to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has
been already considered that he is a proper man to enter
into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark
here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races,
the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married
[833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The
fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking
sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect
there.

613 The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while
585 the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of
[588] her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the
Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the con-
sent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of
the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality.
The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the
kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-
a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation
with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an
informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two
families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24,
answering my question whether he had contracted
Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his
family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him.
The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great
measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families
practically settle the matter. Should the parties find
they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on
under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu
184 Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one
[582] of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for
[789] the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman
[782] sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[795] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804]

* Æma lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ¼ a pint.

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to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla : the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings ; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation ; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who are junior to the deceased. They

[764] [607]

824 765 782 613 [775] [825] [231] place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the fice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 613 574 783 [824] When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] [431] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 613 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of [illegible] boundaries

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765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîkṣha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [604] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears [302] the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of [805] the Dîkṣha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates.
564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": 765 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîkṣha is one of festivity. After 603 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

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796
778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796
783 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included,
780 resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows
765 paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a
302 year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the
776 long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

[See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116--Analyst]

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588 [564] [793] marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house 588 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times 833 when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabita- tion would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been 178 required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 [831] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the [753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar [782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must [834] observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. 588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, [783] they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then [264] fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At 588 the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with 184 other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride- 595 groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological [765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover [783] and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word [851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achan* (originally

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiris before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Aśān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *mangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *mangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *mangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāḍuvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāḍuvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāḍuvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurusis (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilateral or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilateral ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these
582 clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were
[601] large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[428] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *ächāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house.

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services.

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1]

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies.

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her.

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the separate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

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588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

184 588 589 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, father-hood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 588 831 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them.

[083] [065] [069]

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*preḍham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *idli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian.

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Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger.

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On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day.

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families.

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous.

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [529] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

8:Panikkar 1-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

765 [782] [785] [527]

with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sākti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tâli*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified.

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared

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surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

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During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawâd* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawâd*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawâd*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vêlan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyâham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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613 and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed
[782] spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha*
769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha*
[782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased.
[825] Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the
[613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawâd* had better be on the look
766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met
775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly
613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawâd*, invariably rendering
782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahômam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

105 563 1095 There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a 084 Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, 264 atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a 463 Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- 484 adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into 084 town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala 841 today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are 846 still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- 614 idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- 846 sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing 065 in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield before them. 564

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakkctam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution. [783] [793]

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family. [765]

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled. [797]

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come [231] home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

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588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 184 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the cal- 613 cined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male [415] members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or 769 ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there 613 deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

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no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

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766
613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from
765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the
[784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-
[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the
[564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus
[793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they
[782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other
[465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the
[302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite.
[825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of
[775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

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mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or

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same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

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here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general structures as elsewhere.

We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary relations between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

I have no information about the terminology of reference or address, though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong